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The situation in Central America: progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005

The situation in Central America: progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/58/L.38

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

I. Request contained in the draft resolution

1. Under the terms of operative paragraphs 16 and 19 of draft resolution A/58/L.38, the General Assembly would:

(a) Take note with satisfaction of the intention of the Government of Guatemala to establish a commission for the investigation of illegal groups and clandestine security apparatuses, and urge the Secretary-General to support that initiative with a view to its prompt implementation;

(b) Request the Secretary-General to continue to lend his fullest support to the initiatives and activities of the Central American Governments, in particular their efforts to consolidate democracy through the promotion of integration and the implementation of a comprehensive sustainable development programme, and to submit to the General Assembly a complete consolidated report on the implementation of all the relevant resolutions on Central America at its sixtieth session under the item entitled "The situation in Central America: progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development", and decide that thenceforth the item would be considered every two years.

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II. Relationship of the proposed request to the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005

2. The above-mentioned request relates to subprogramme 1, Prevention, control and resolution of conflicts, of programme 1, Political affairs, of the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005.

III. Activities by which the proposed request would be implemented

3. Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/58/L.38, the Secretary-General would continue to provide good offices, as required, as well as substantive support and political guidance; would continue to follow closely the situation in Central America with the aim of overcoming the underlying causes of conflict and consolidating peace and democracy in the region; and would continue to lend full support to the initiatives and activities of the Central American Governments, particularly in their efforts to consolidate peace and democracy.

IV. Requirements at full cost

4. In order to provide adequate support to the Secretary-General's efforts in Central America, resources would be needed for the continued engagement of the services of one Professional post (P-4 level) and one General Service post (Other level).

5. The political affairs officer (P-4) would continue to monitor the Guatemalan peace process and to provide backstopping and political guidance to the peace-building activities of the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA) during its final year of operations. When necessary, he/she would also follow up on the operational, personnel and financial matters pertaining to MINUGUA. In addition, the officer would brief, and distribute information to, permanent missions, academic institutions and non-governmental organizations interested in the Guatemalan peace process. With regard to El Salvador, the officer would assist in the joint follow-up activities of the United Nations Development Programme and the Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat to ensure compliance with pending issues from the 1992 peace agreement. The officer would also monitor and follow developments in the Central American subregion.

6. The General Service staff member would continue to provide research/secretarial assistance as well as administrative backstopping for the above-mentioned activities.

7. The estimated costs relating to the salaries and common staff costs for those two staff members for 2004 would amount to $218,000. Other operational requirements relating to the two staff would be covered within the overall budget of the Department of Political Affairs.

V. Action required from the General Assembly

8. **Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/58/L.38, a provision in the amount of $218,000 would be required for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2004.**

9. **These requirements would be charged against the provision of $163,178,100 (before re-costing) proposed for special political missions under section 3, Political affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005.**

10. Requirements arising from draft resolution A/58/L.38 for 2005 have not been included in the present statement of programme budget implications. Such requirements, together with those for other political missions, will be contained in the report of the Secretary-General on estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council, to be submitted to the Assembly at its fifty-ninth session.